

**STRATEGIC PLAN
2011 – 2016**



**LEADERSHIP AND
INNOVATION FOR A
CHANGING WORLD**

MARIST



**MARIST COLLEGE
STRATEGIC PLAN
2011–2016**

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FOR A CHANGING WORLD**

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PREFACE

Since the time of its charter in 1946, Marist College has matured from a small, local college into a nationally recognized leader among comprehensive institutions grounded in the liberal arts. Today, Marist is a highly selective institution with an international reputation for quality and distinctiveness. We pride ourselves on developing students with the intellect, character, and skills required for enlightened, ethical, and productive lives in the global community of the 21st century. The College now educates more than 5,000 students with a diverse range of backgrounds and interests, and it is recognized as a leader for the manner in which it uses information technology to enhance the teaching and learning process. More than \$300 million in capital construction and improvements have been implemented on the Poughkeepsie campus over the past decade alone, and the College recently received a \$75 million gift including a 60-acre riverfront estate in Esopus, New York, and an endowment to support the Raymond A. Rich Institute for Leadership Development. Additionally, the reach of the College has grown to include a branch campus in Florence, Italy, an extension site in Fishkill, New York, and a global online presence.

The College's *Strategic Plan 2004-2009, Building on Success*, recognized that Marist has done many things well in the half century since its founding. But as the College has changed, so too has the world around it, including the landscape of higher education. Students graduating from Marist today are entering an increasingly complex and closely networked global economy with a unique set of opportunities and challenges. In order to fulfill its mission, the College must find a way to balance a continued commitment to the guiding principles and traditions that have contributed to its success with the need for innovation and change.

In May 2010, President Dennis J. Murray named a 40-person Steering Committee, and the College embarked on a yearlong, comprehensive, institution-wide strategic planning process. This process was broad-based and inclusive; it engaged students, faculty, administrative staff, alumni, trustees, and other stakeholders in shaping the institution's strategic direction for the next five years. Opinions were solicited in person through 12 Steering Committee meetings, five Board Planning Retreats, 12 campus-wide briefings, and seven academic-school meetings. In addition, the College made use of its extensive technology platform to distribute draft documents electronically for community review and comment.

The key issues at the heart of the planning process were two basic yet multifaceted questions: Does the direction proposed in the Plan make the College a stronger, more distinctive, and more competitive institution? Furthermore, does it help us to construct a long-term, sustainable economic model with a value proposition that attracts students, an economic proposition that enables the College to enhance its solid financial position, and a people proposition that allows the College to attract and retain the type of faculty and staff capable of delivering the value proposition?

Drawing from a comprehensive analysis of the College’s strengths, challenges, opportunities, and threats, as well as the recommendations of all constituent groups, the Steering Committee identified eight broad, institution-level Strategic Goals. These Strategic Goals represent a continued commitment to the College’s historic institutional strengths, as well as the identification of new directions for experimentation and growth. Knowing that vision becomes reality only where the path for implementation is clear and concrete, targeted and achievable initiatives support each Goal, shaping a vision for the future that is linked to the College’s annual operating plans.

The development of this Plan would not have been possible without the active involvement of the Steering Committee members, who gave so generously of their time and insights. We are also especially grateful to members of the Board of Trustees for the direction and guidance they provided throughout the planning process. It is with gratitude to the collective wisdom of the campus community and great confidence in the inclusiveness of our process that we present this Strategic Plan, an important step in continuing and enhancing the success of Marist College.



MISSION STATEMENT

Marist is dedicated to helping students develop the intellect, character, and skills required for enlightened, ethical, and productive lives in the global community of the 21st century.

VALUES STATEMENT

The College fulfills its mission by pursuing three ideals: excellence in education, a sense of community, and a commitment to service. These ideals were handed down to us by the Marist Brothers who founded the College. Now an independent institution governed by a lay board of trustees, Marist continues to embrace the three ideals as an integral part of the College mission.

Excellence in Education

Marist achieves its ideal of excellence in undergraduate, graduate, and professional education by actively engaging each student through exemplary teaching and distinctive learning opportunities.

At the undergraduate level, this begins with a firm foundation in the liberal arts and sciences. Through the core curriculum and major fields of study, students learn to think logically and creatively, to synthesize and integrate methods and insights from a variety of disciplines, and to express themselves effectively orally, in writing, and through media. Students consider the ethical dimensions of the subjects they study and become more aware of their own values, the values of others, and the implications of the choices they make in their public and private lives. They explore diverse cultures through coursework, extracurricular programs, international study, internships, and service opportunities. Students in all programs learn critical thinking and problem-solving skills requisite for effective leadership in a complex and diverse society.

The Marist ideal of excellence in education finds distinctive expression in programs tailored for the graduate and adult learners the College has long served. Study at the graduate level emphasizes

breadth and depth of knowledge for career development. In a climate of collegiality, students refine the intellectual and personal qualities they need to contribute to their fields. Graduate, undergraduate degree completion, and professional programs are designed to accommodate the needs of adult students to balance education with work and family responsibilities. Maintaining the high standards that characterize all educational offerings, Marist presents programs for adult students in alternate locations, formats, and methods of delivery.

A distinguishing feature of the Marist education is the manner in which information technology is used to support teaching, learning, and scholarship. The College, a leader in educational applications of information technology, offers students access to advanced technologies to help them develop as lifelong learners and productive members of their communities. Technology resources are combined with flexible and innovative program formats to expand access to higher education for all students.

A Sense of Community

The Marist ideal of community is based on the belief that we become a better institution through the active involvement of faculty, staff, students, and alumni in the life of the College. Seeking to create relationships that will last a lifetime, we nurture the well-being and development of all our community members and cultivate their bonds with the College and each other. Marist encourages students to collaborate with faculty and staff on research, creative, and service projects, and to share the results of their work with a wider community of scholars. We take particular care to ensure that student activities build a sense of community while supporting educational goals. We are a diverse community united by a shared commitment to the free exchange of ideas, consideration of the opinions of others, and civility in all our interactions. As members of the global community, we are committed to the collective stewardship of our environment.

A Commitment to Service

The Marist ideal of service is predicated on our belief in the dignity and value of every human being. The College sponsors and supports programs to meet a wide variety of community needs, and to offer broadened access to education. We encourage students, faculty, staff, and alumni to make service an important part of their lives. Both individual students and student organizations engage in service activities, including programs that assist those in need, projects throughout the Hudson River Valley, and other humanitarian initiatives around the world. By sharing their time and talents, students help make Marist a better place to live and learn while developing a sense of personal responsibility and civic engagement.

STRATEGIC GOALS AND SUPPORTING INITIATIVES

I. Enhance the Quality and Distinctiveness of the Marist Educational Experience for All Students—Traditional-Age Undergraduates, Graduate Students, and Adult Learners.

Initiatives—General

1. Provide an increasingly distinctive education that remains affordable.
2. Promote greater faculty and student collaboration on scholarly and creative projects.
3. Enhance and expand our internationally recognized technology-enabled learning experience.
4. Promote exceptional and wide-ranging international study experiences to facilitate global awareness.
5. Strengthen career awareness, planning, and placement services for all current students and alumni.
6. Continue systematic review and assessment of programs emphasizing learning outcomes to ensure standards of high quality are maintained.
7. Document and reward outstanding teaching, scholarship, and service, and communicate these professional accomplishments to the wider community.
8. Leverage our historic Hudson River Valley location with a curriculum that engages meaningfully with the region from New York City to Albany.
9. Develop new strategies to recruit, mentor, and retain highly qualified full-time and part-time faculty.
10. Review and enhance retention plans for all student populations.
11. Increase the number of full-time faculty at a rate that exceeds the growth rate in traditional-age undergraduate students and at appropriate levels for graduate and adult student population growth.
12. Move forward with the implementation of the Campus Master Plan to address academic space needs, including: the renovation of space in Lowell Thomas, the Dyson Center, and Fontaine Hall freed up by the opening of the Hancock Center; upgrades to science labs; and the addition to the Dyson Center.
13. Move forward with the implementation of the Campus Master Plan to address student life and residential space needs, including: the addition and renovation of the McCann Center; the completion of the Route 9 Pedestrian Walkway; the addition of space for the music program; the renovation of the dining hall; and expanded student housing.

Initiatives—Traditional-Age Undergraduates:

14. Provide a comprehensive education with a strong liberal arts core, and enhance it by emphasizing breadth of knowledge, interdisciplinary scholarship, skill development, and community engagement.
15. Integrate and enhance Marist's current first-year offerings to create a comprehensive first-year experience.

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16. Encourage student experiences outside of the classroom, including internships, civic engagement, study abroad, research, and service learning, that build pathways to careers or advanced study.
 17. Explore new academic programs, student-life activities, and marketing strategies that help ensure gender balance in full-time undergraduate student enrollment.
 18. Continue to raise the profile of athletics at Marist by ensuring that student athletes experience success both in the classroom and in athletic competition.
 19. Continue an enrollment strategy for the traditional-age undergraduate population on the Poughkeepsie campus that is based on (a) minimal growth of about one percent per year and (b) improved retention.

Initiatives - Graduate Students

20. Build on successful and innovative program models, such as our ongoing partnerships with law enforcement agencies and health care organizations.
21. Systematically monitor trends in the graduate student market and survey the student population to determine what programs, delivery formats, services, and price points should be enhanced, developed, or modified.
22. Strengthen student support services for graduate students and make them more accessible, including online and on-campus services.
23. Conduct a comprehensive review of the competitiveness of graduate programs and the methods that are used to market the programs.
24. Assist faculty in developing knowledge and skills specific to advising graduate students.
25. Increase integration of graduate programs with undergraduate and adult programs, with more five-year, certificate, degree completion, and other feeder programs.
26. Develop community-based learning experiences for graduate students including research, internships, and service learning opportunities.

Initiatives - Adult Learners

27. Build on successful and innovative program models, such as those offered by the Institute for Data Center Professionals (IDCP).
28. Systematically monitor trends in the adult student market and survey the student population to determine what programs, delivery formats, price points, and services should be enhanced, developed, or modified.
29. Strengthen student support services for adult students and make them more accessible, including online and on-campus services.
30. Conduct a comprehensive review of the competitiveness of adult programs and the methods that are used to market the programs.
31. Better integrate adult degree completion programs with graduate education.
32. Continue to grow professional development and certificate programs.
33. Improve adult student life by allocating additional space and resources for programming and student interaction.
34. Enhance relationships with the adult alumni population.

II. Promote Innovation, Experimentation, and Creativity Throughout All Academic and Administrative Areas of the College.

Initiatives

1. Support a campus culture that encourages and rewards experimentation and innovation.
2. Experiment with new models of education delivery, methods for assessment, and certification of knowledge.
3. Establish a method and process independent of regular operations that explores and nurtures emerging and forward-thinking opportunities that are consistent with our mission and values and have long-term revenue potential.
4. Continually review opportunities for new markets and educational offerings in professional and graduate programs.
5. Develop interdisciplinary courses and programs that promote integrated learning.
6. Develop new pricing models responsive to student ability to pay.
7. Streamline the process for developing new academic courses and programs.
8. Use the Hancock Center to promote entrepreneurship and the economic development of small to mid-sized businesses.
9. Broaden our efforts to capitalize on the Hudson River as an educational resource in such areas as history, ecology, environmental law, and public policy.
10. Continue the College's efforts to implement environmentally sustainable practices and teach our students about lifelong environmental stewardship.
11. Develop and provide for uses of space that promote creativity, diverse ideas, and collaboration.

III. Become a Recognized Institution for Preparing Ethical and Effective Leaders for a Global Society.

Initiatives

1. Develop a shared vision of the distinctive contribution Marist will make to the field of leadership development.
2. Establish a comprehensive plan as to how the Raymond A. Rich Institute for Leadership Development will enhance student learning through a unique focus on communication skills, ethics, and global perspectives.
3. Design, implement, and support academic and co-curricular programming in leadership development across undergraduate, graduate, professional, and executive programs.
4. Leverage our technology platform to provide education and information about leadership around the world through an online presence.
5. Utilize the Raymond A. Rich Institute for Leadership Development to involve and connect leaders from different sectors with the Marist community.

IV. Advance Our Leadership Role in Using Technology to Support Teaching, Learning, Scholarship, and Institutional Effectiveness.

Initiatives

1. Implement and influence new open-source strategies and further promote community-source projects to enhance quality and effectiveness, maintain first-adopter advantage, and reduce operational costs.
2. Initiate an advanced Web strategy that includes constant updates, interactivity, social media connections, portability, multimedia tools, and converged communications capabilities.
3. Encourage and support the ethical and appropriate use of social media, real-time collaboration, and other forms of mediated communication to promote innovative ideas and problem solving.
4. Capitalize on the full functionality of the newly implemented Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) and other service systems to more effectively provide online services to all students, faculty, and staff.
5. Increase opportunities and incentives for faculty to use technology in all teaching venues, research, and scholarship, and provide opportunities to share successful and creative uses.
6. Build on successful models such as the mainframe Knowledge Center of IBM's global academic initiative in order to create an international reputation for expertise in technological learning.
7. Continue to upgrade our infrastructure so that we remain a leader in technology-enhanced education.

V. Build a More Diverse and International College Community.

Initiatives—General

1. Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the campus climate, using the results to ensure that we are a receptive and inviting community that promotes equity and access for all individuals.
2. Implement diversity initiatives based on research of best practices across the industry.

Initiatives—Students

3. Increase the diversity of the student population across all parameters, including racial/ethnic, geographic, gender, socioeconomic, religious, and other characteristics.
4. Develop a comprehensive funding strategy, including grant opportunities, to provide more financial aid to students in need.
5. Enhance programs and support services for underrepresented and international students.
6. Increase the number of students studying abroad across all areas of the globe, especially in non-Western locations.
7. Increase the number of international students studying at Marist.

Initiatives—Workforce

8. Implement a focused recruitment plan to address areas of underrepresentation and increase the diversity of the workforce.

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9. Develop and implement a diversity outreach program to recruit and attract minority candidates for faculty and administrative employment opportunities at the College.
 10. Continue to expand the role of the Diversity Council, including its sponsorship of programs that emphasize and celebrate diversity at the College.
 11. Develop and deliver a comprehensive training program for faculty and staff that promotes the understanding and value of diversity.

VI. Maintain a Distinctive and Cohesive Marist Community at Campus Sites, Online, and Abroad.

Initiatives

1. Ensure that the ideals, heritage, and history of the Marist Brothers remain an integral part of the College's programs and activities.
2. Further develop the orientation process for all entering students.
3. Enhance and standardize the orientation process for all new full-time and part-time faculty and staff, including a component on the distinctive characteristics of the Marist educational experience.
4. Create more collaborative spaces and promote collaborative work among students, faculty, and staff.
5. Provide more community service and service learning opportunities for students, faculty, and staff.
6. Strengthen relationships with local town, city, and county officials and with neighboring residents to provide personal growth and learning opportunities for students.
7. Develop and implement tailored communications and engagement strategies to ensure a life-long connection between the College and all students, alumni, parents, friends, and current and former employees.
8. Develop a set of operating principles to ensure that students in online programs feel strongly connected to the Marist community.
9. Further strengthen our connection to the Florence branch campus and other sites.

VII. Strengthen the College's Network with External Organizations and Increase Strategic Partnerships to Create New Opportunities for Students, Faculty, Staff, and Alumni.

Initiatives

1. Strengthen and expand advisory boards to enhance our academic programs, create high-quality student internships, increase job placement and employment opportunities for our students, and generate fund-raising opportunities.
2. Further refine the College's targeted electronic and social media communications strategy to enhance relationships with external constituencies including alumni, trustees, parents, guidance counselors, and other groups.
3. Develop relationships with external organizations in government, corporate, nonprofit, and other sectors that will help advance the mission of the Raymond A. Rich Institute for Leadership Development.

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4. Enhance relationships with corporate or governmental organizations with professional development/training programs that can act as feeders to graduate, professional, and degree completion programs.
 5. Improve collaboration between the College and the Marist Brothers' network worldwide to the mutual benefit of both organizations.
 6. Strengthen existing networks and partnerships in order to provide students, faculty, and staff members with access to new technologies that can be integrated into courses and research.
 7. Foster relationships with other educational institutions that could lead to partnerships, articulation agreements, and combined degree programs.

VIII. Diversify and Grow the Financial Base of the College.

Initiatives

1. Continue to maintain a budget model that results in annual operating surpluses and is based on fiscally sound resource allocation and investment practices.
2. Implement a budget development process that encourages and rewards growth in revenue and savings in operations.
3. Develop and implement a business plan and operating strategy for graduate and adult programs that will increase enrollment and net income.
4. Broaden the enrollment base, building on established successes: summer pre-college programs, winter/summer intersession courses, internships, and international programs.
5. Continue to broaden fund-raising initiatives among alumni, trustees, corporations, foundations, and individual donors to increase the endowment for scholarships, endowed chairs, and academic programs, as well as designated support for capital initiatives.
6. Pursue more grants based on faculty strengths and interests, and offer greater financial rewards for grant-winning faculty and their individual schools.
7. Provide content and delivery systems as well as hosting services to colleges, universities, and other organizations to increase revenue streams and reputation.
8. Develop appropriate offerings to respond to students who graduate in fewer than four years, such as combined undergraduate and graduate programs.
9. Capture savings as a result of increased operational efficiencies across all areas of the College.

CONCLUSION

The attainment of the Strategic Goals and Initiatives set forth in this Plan will make Marist an even stronger institution in the year 2016 than it is today. Our vision for the future requires that we continue offering an increasingly high-quality and distinctive academic experience, as one of the top comprehensive liberal arts colleges in the country. Our success begins with our distinct undergraduate experience, complemented by growth in graduate and adult programs.

Marist will strengthen its liberal arts core, and the institution's culture will increasingly promote and reward experimentation, creativity, and innovation, instilling in our students the ability to adapt to the ever-changing job market of the 21st century. We will leverage our network of strategic partners in the corporate, government, and nonprofit sectors to create unique learning, research, and employment opportunities for both current students and alumni. As a result, graduates of the College will continue to gain admission to the most selective graduate programs, compete successfully for the most prestigious fellowships, and secure employment at the best organizations.

Excellence in 21st-century higher education requires a culture that rewards creative and entrepreneurial faculty and staff. Marist faculty promote educational experimentation, dynamic and interdisciplinary course offerings, and innovative learning experiences. At the administrative level, the College is committed to combining its reputation for affordability and operational efficiency with the capacity for bold institutional change.

To meet the challenges of the future, we will remain a leader in technology-enhanced learning, and will expand this role to include the use of technology to improve scholarship and institutional effectiveness. Leadership development is also essential to our future success in preparing productive and ethical global citizens. Through the Raymond A. Rich Institute for Leadership Development, we will engage leaders from different sectors and make a distinguished contribution to the field of leadership development. Our leadership development program will emphasize interpersonal communication, ethics, and global perspectives, ensuring that graduates of the College are prepared to serve as leaders in their professions, communities, and in society.

In order to develop leaders in a diverse, globally connected and culturally complex world, the Marist community must reflect the multifaceted elements of that world. Disparate geographies, cultures, ethnicities, socioeconomic backgrounds, and many other characteristics of diversity are all essential realities of the world our students prepare to enter. We recognize that a commitment to inclusiveness is important for the benefit of the institution and all of its members, and we dedicate ourselves to increasing, supporting, and celebrating diversity in all areas of the Marist community.

Grounded in our heritage and history with the Marist Brothers, our values recognize the importance of community, and we carefully foster that sense of cohesion across all of our endeavors. As we expand the educational opportunities for our students through our campus locations around the globe and continue to innovate and lead in the field of online education, we realize that our success is closely tied to our sense of community. Strengthening our community in an interconnected world also requires that we continue to develop strategic alliances in the Hudson River Valley and around the world by engaging our network of institutional partners, as well as friends of the College, our faculty, parents, guidance counselors, students, and alumni.

Institutional excellence as a college is inexorably linked to our fiscal strength, and our stability in the current higher education environment is due to our commitment to that principle. Our continued growth in prestige and influence is only possible with careful management and diversification of fiscal resources.

Ultimately, our success depends upon an institutional ability to shape our future, hold true to our mission, and execute strategies that enable the attainment of our Goals. This Plan charts an exciting and challenging course into the future and provides a framework for creativity, innovation, and healthy growth. But in the end a Strategic Plan is only as effective as its implementation, and we as a community must commit to that process. With these principles in mind, we offer our strategic vision for the future of Marist College.

STRATEGIC PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

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James Melitski	Associate Professor of Public Administration

Members

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